



2005 Agricultural Management Assistance

Customer Focus

Wishing Stone Farm is an organic farm, owned and operated by Skip Paul and his wife Liz Peckham, and is situated just near the coastline in picturesque Little Compton, Rhode Island. Twelve of the 28 acres are certified as organic, and the rest, either are in transition to organic, or are being utilized for specialty crops. The farm sells their crops directly to the consumer through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Customers buy shares of the crops up front, and when the crops are harvested, they take home fresh organic and locally grown produce. The owners were having a problem on the farm with deer devouring their crops. With over \$12,000 of crop damage last year, they asked for assistance from NRCS. The Agriculture Management Assistance program provided the needed help to fence out the deer. NRCS provided financial and technical assistance, and 1400^{ft} of deer fencing was installed to keep the intruders at bay. As part of the farm's conservation plan, irrigation pipes will be installed early next year with both financial and technical help from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.



Rhode Island Summary

Overview

The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) provides cost share assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality; and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming. AMA is available in the following 15 States:

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. These states were designated by the Secretary of Agriculture where participation on the Federal Crop Insurance Program is historically low.

Accomplishments

In 2005, 27 applications were ranked, and due to funding limitations, only three contracts were developed from the highest ranked applications, obligating \$97,545. The three 2005 contracts will address deer predation on an orchard and a vegetable operation, and bird damage on a vineyard. Crop damages on these three farms were reported between eight and %50 in 2004. Two of the operations are also located in areas that do not allow hunting. Installing the deer fencing will greatly enhance the long-term viability of these small farms.

Outlook

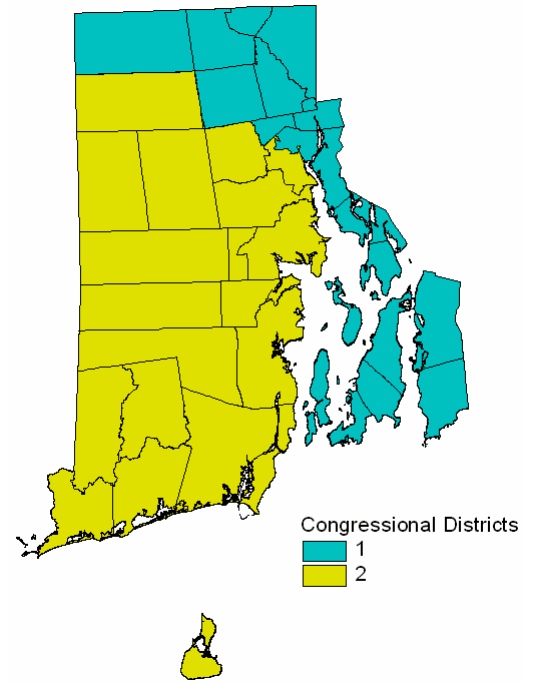
The AMA program continues to be one of the most popular conservation programs offered in RI. Typically, RI NRCS is only able to fund 10% of the applications received. Unfortunately, the outlook for the AMA program is unclear at this time due to proposed budget cuts at the national level. If funding is received, RI will focus efforts in 2006 on addressing new irrigation needs, as deer fencing will be an allowed practice under the much higher funded Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

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Rhode Island's AMA Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District



Rhode Island's Agricultural Management Assistance

Fiscal Year 2005			Cumulative Total (2001 – 2005)	
Congressional Districts	AMA Dollars	Number of Contracts	AMA Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$25,960	1	\$129,589	8
District 2	\$71,585	2	\$210,264	11
State Totals	\$97,545	3	\$339,853	19

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